

**AIR ARMAMENT CENTER (AAC)
ACQUISITION SUPPORT TEAM (AST)
Process Description**

1. PURPOSE

This document identifies the Air Armament Center (AAC) process for providing pre-award acquisition support to AAC organizations who are planning new contracts and/or major modifications to existing contracts and identifies the mission, roles, and responsibilities of the Eglin AST.

2. REFERENCES

- a. HQ AFMC Programming Plan (PPLAN) 98-02.
- b. SAF/AQ Lightning Bolt 95-1, Establishment of Center-level Request For Proposal (RFP) Support Teams to scrub all RFPs, contract options, and contract modifications.
- c. SAF/AQ Lightning Bolt 99-1, Acquisition Support Teams.
- d. SAF/AQ Memorandum, Subject: Participation of Acquisition Support Teams in Activities Prior to Contract Award, dated 13 Jan 00.

3. PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

- a. AAC/PK
- b. AAC/46TW
- c. AAC/EN
- d. AAC/WM
- e. AAC/96ABW
- f. AAC/FM
- g. AAC/JA
- h. AAC/EM
- i. Other AAC Contracting Customers (53 WG, AFRL, etc)

4. FUNCTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT

a. AST Responsibilities - The AST is a multi-functional team dedicated to assisting AAC acquisition teams in all phases of the acquisition process. These activities include, but are not limited to, risk assessment, acquisition strategy development, performance-based solicitation development, source selection, and contractor debriefing. The AST is chartered to promote and publicize the tenets and initiatives of continuing acquisition process improvement, as well as provide acquisition training to appropriate AAC personnel and teams. The goal is to ensure consistent application of acquisition reform initiatives across AFMC, as well as dissemination of best practices and lessons learned.

b. Customer/End User Responsibilities -

- (1) Notify the AST of upcoming acquisition actions and requirements.
- (2) Formulate contract requirements and associated documentation.
- (3) Involve the AST throughout the acquisition process.

5. MISSION STATEMENT

The AST provides multi-disciplined acquisition expertise, tools, templates, and training to improve the quality and timeliness of acquisitions for AAC. AST members work as a member of the acquisition team from requirements definition through contract award. We support DAC and PEO systems acquisition programs; test and O&M requirements, operational requirements, and A-76 studies with just-in-time training and hands on advice and assistance. This support is available, and encouraged, for all acquisitions; mandatory for:

Product Support efforts	over \$10M
Test and Evaluation efforts	over \$500K
Investment and Sustainment efforts	over \$500K

The AST is the AAC focal point for acquisition reform initiatives and improvements, including Lightning Bolts, Acquisition Reinvention initiatives, and other DOD acquisition reform initiatives.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. Communicate acquisition ideas, innovations and lessons learned.
- b. Accelerate and institutionalize acquisition process improvement in AAC.
- c. Embed continuing acquisition process improvements in all phases of the acquisition process.
- d. Suggest improvement by achieving Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act/Federal Acquisition Reform Act goals.

- e. Foster open and timely communication and coordination on reform issues, guidance, processes, and actions.
- f. Provide timely assistance, education, processes, guides, tools, and templates to accelerate and simplify acquisitions, from program initiation through contract award.
- g. Develop career broadening acquisition expertise in assigned personnel.

7. SPECIFIC TASKS

- a. The Chief of the AST serves as AAC's Acquisition Reform Champion.
- b. Team with industry to identify acquisition process streamlining opportunities.
- c. Cross-flow acquisition reform best practices and lessons learned.
- d. Provide cross-functional acquisition expertise to facilitate requirements definition and creation of streamlined solicitations.
- e. Maintain familiarity with tools needed to assist requirements definition, RFP preparation and award.
- f. Support and monitor new program starts.
- g. Support acquisition strategy development as Acquisition Strategy Panel (ASP) Secretariat.
- h. Schedule and facilitate acquisition training, from program initiation through source selection.
- i. Assist AAC organizations in translating requirements into statements of objectives (SOO), performance work statements (PWS), and statements of work (SOW).
- j. Assist program teams in acquisition process planning, including risk assessment and Cost As an Independent Variable (CAIV) implementation.
- k. Manage and maintain the source selection facility. Provide training on all source selection processes and provide assistance during source selection.
- l. Employ metrics to monitor/improve the acquisition process.
- m. Provide acquisition expertise to programs with existing contracts.
- n. Interact with AFMC on acquisition related issues.

o. Serve as the AAC Contractor Performance Assessment Report (CPAR) focal point; provide training and maintain CPAR database.

p. Act as the center OPR for all acquisition reform activities.

8. INTERRELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER AAC OFFICES

The AST responds to individual program office needs through continuing contact and a willingness to “evolve” to fit the changing needs of the acquisition community. Contact will be by attendance at program team meetings, telephone conversations, e-mail, and any other available form of communication. The AST should be part of “the team” and not viewed as an outside entity attempting to change/influence the team. The AST will bridge program offices to one another and to other acquisition expertise wherever it may be. The AST will become familiar with unique and varied requirements associated with each program office, including their training needs, through consistent interaction with program offices. This will allow the AST to transfer lessons learned/best practices from one program to another. Inherent to the successful operation of the AST is the support of the Contract Clearance and Policy office (AAC/PKC), and the Acquisition Law office (AAC/JAQ). The process used by the AST to work with acquisition teams will generally fall into one of the following four service categories:

a. Consultation Services

The focus of the consultation services provided is on building strong relationships with program office teams and providing points of contact for acquisition questions and issues. The AST will establish and maintain close contact with all Eglin AFB program offices. Whenever a new acquisition effort is contemplated or an acquisition related issue arises, the AST will interact with the program team to perform appropriate training, workshops, consultation on acquisition strategy, documentation reviews, and other activities deemed appropriate by the program team and AST. The AST will focus on strategy and acquisition concepts, and will work closely with the Contract Clearance and Policy office, which is responsible for ensuring contracting policy compliance, and legal, which is responsible for legal issues and compliance. The AST /Contracting/legal team will provide acquisition teams with different perspectives on acquisition concepts/processes/issues.

b. Training Services

(1) The AST will deliver and manage training for program teams, and staff, on acquisition processes, best practices, etc. This training is categorized into four phases: requirements definition, acquisition strategy development; request for proposal development; and source selection. Primary customers for training are teams entering into the acquisition process, including source selection, and working towards contract award. A workshop training environment that results in useful team products oriented to a team’s specific acquisition will be emphasized.

(2) The AST will continually strive to improve its training services to customers. It will do this by obtaining, reviewing and comparing feedback from teams, as well as interfacing with resources throughout AFMC. Non-attribution, non-personal peer reviews of presentations and training modules will be conducted following each training session. The AST will be responsible for developing/obtaining current training modules and for modifying/tailoring them to meet various needs.

c. Acquisition Strategy Panel (ASP) Services

The AST will function as the AAC Acquisition Strategy Panel Secretariat. The Secretariat's roles and responsibilities, as well as the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved in acquisition strategy planning are documented in the AAC ASP Process Description document. The AST will help program teams to ensure that ASP processes are followed to allow for appropriate contracting actions.

d. Source Selection Services

The AST is responsible for all aspects of the source selection facility including training, managing/maintaining the facility, and implementation of new source selection techniques (ie. electronic source selection). Major tasks include: understanding of current source selection policy; reviewing documentation; providing consultation support; providing early and just-in-time training to source selection teams; managing and maintaining electronic source selection capability; and managing all aspects of the collection and use of past performance in source selections, including the CPAR library.

9. PERSONNEL ASSIGNMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

a. The AST Chief will be certified at APDP Program Management Level III and will concentrate on providing quality support to acquisition teams. The Chief, along with the Deputy, an experienced contracting officer, will lead and serve as mentors for the AST. The AST will be manned by multidiscipline personnel possessing a broad range of acquisition experience. These representatives will be highly proficient in their respective disciplines of program management, engineering, contracting, financial management, and test and evaluation.

b. Although each has a primary area of expertise, all AST members/personnel will have a broad knowledge of the entire acquisition process and a basic understanding and appreciation of other functional disciplines. Assigned personnel will be selected based on a demonstrated record of being (1) "team-oriented", and (2) capable of understanding general concepts/concerns/approaches/issues from an overall perspective. All AST members will have sufficient breadth of experience to adequately aid teams requiring a wide variety of products and services via a wide range of acquisition approaches.

c. Functional personnel will be matrixed into the AST. To ensure the AST provides maximum benefit to the Center, assignments will be on a rotational basis. This rotation policy will insure that the AST stays current with concerns of line program managers and functional

specialists, and that the acquisition expertise and experience gained by AST personnel is distributed throughout every level of the Center. Normal AST assignments will be 18-24 months. Personnel completing their AST assignment will be placed in program offices or buying offices.

d. Below is a list of positions and respective functional discipline for full time staffing of the AST, as well as ad hoc, part time support. This manning will be monitored and compared to workload fluctuations. Periodic manning reassessments will be made to verify if the staffing level is still adequate for out-year workload.

FULL TIME SUPPORT:

Role	Discipline
Chief, AST	Program Management
Deputy, AST	Contracting
Program Liaison	Financial Management
Program Liaison	Test & Evaluation
Program Liaison	Engineering
Program Liaison	Program Management
Program Liaison	Program Management or Engineering
Source Selection Officer	Contracting
Source Selection Facility; CPARS	Contracting

AD HOC SUPPORT:

Office	Function	Support Provided
AAC/PKC	Contracting	Policy guidance; acquisition reform and streamlining concept development, definition, and implementation support.
AAC/PKX	Contracting	Computer/automation support
AAC/JAQ	Legal	Legal guidance and support

Functional employees that are matrixed into the AST will be rated by the chief of the AST. Second level endorsement will be accomplished by the 2 letter chief from the matrixed individual's home office.